



The California Master Plan for Education

What is the California Master Plan for Education?

The Master Plan provides a groundbreaking blueprint for strategic planning of pre-K through university education policy and finance by taking a comprehensive, long-term approach to restructuring education in California. The plan is designed to serve as a roadmap for policymakers by laying out a series of guidelines and structural changes to improve and transform student learning over a 20-year period.

The Master Plan, a comprehensive policy document delivered to the Legislature in August 2002 after nearly four years of work, is the result of a collaborative, statewide effort that drew on the expertise of hundreds of education experts, academics and businesspeople, civic leaders, parents and other interested Californians. The plan contains 174 recommendations and makes California the first state in the nation to have produced a seamless set of education goals from preschool through university levels.

The vision at the heart of the plan is to place the needs of students first in every education policy decision we make in the future, to ensure a focus on student achievement. Two primary goals hold that vision aloft: to provide every family with the information, services and support needed to give every child the best possible start in life and school; and to provide every public school, college, and university with the resources and authority needed to ensure that all students receive a rigorous, quality education—their best preparation to become self-sustaining learners for life.

The Master Plan should be used by the Legislature as a template to ensure that proposed education legislation in coming years is consistently directed toward reaching the goals contained in the plan.

The Master Plan addresses major issues that impede student achievement: disparities in educational quality, particularly for low-income students and students of color; large enrollment growth, fragmented governance and the attendant lack of accountability. The plan is comprehensive in scope and focuses on four critical areas of California's educational system: access, achievement, accountability, and affordability. Each section opens with a vision and is followed by specific recommendations on the goals California should pursue over the next two decades. The plan also calls for periodic reviews at least every 10 years so that it may be modified as necessary.